



The
SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS
of the
Nashville-Davidson County
Metropolitan
Planning Commission
Adopted March 9, 2006



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The Subdivision Regulations
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Illustration Credits:

Figures 4-1, 4-2, and 4-3 have been adapted from illustrations from Randall Arendt's "Growing Greener: Putting Conservation into Local Codes" (November 1997) and "Crossroads, Hamlet, Village, Town: Design Characteristics of Traditional Neighborhoods, Old and New" (April 2004).

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

These Subdivision Regulations are about expanding choices for development that better reflect the patterns of development in Nashville and Davidson County. As Nashville continues to grow and develop, the choice is not whether growth will occur but how well it will occur. Nashville and Davidson County together are a large, complex area with varying patterns of development ranging from very urban to very rural. The future is about continuing those patterns while creating new patterns that enhance existing places and preserve the significant resources that are important to us all.

The first major step in the development process is to divide a parcel of land into lots, streets, and open spaces. How land is divided defines the pattern of a community, which in turn shapes its character. The Zoning Code controls land use and the Subdivision Regulations control the pattern of development. Dividing land also defines traffic circulation patterns and access, dedicates rights-of way, and reserves tracts of land to protect environmental resources (floodplains, wetlands, forested areas). The Subdivision Regulations guide development of land consistent with the established policies of the Metro Nashville Government as well as providing the opportunity to ensure that new neighborhoods and developments are properly designed and that new subdivisions are integrated into the community

Applying the Community Transect

To conceptualize the diversity of development and density patterns in Nashville/Davidson County, the Metro Planning Department uses a tool called the Community Transect. The Community Transect provides a continuum of development patterns ranging from rural to urban. There are seven transect zones:

1. *Natural Areas*. Publicly and privately owned land intended to be permanently maintained as open space for preservation or recreational needs.
2. *Rural Areas*. Low intensity development, farms, forestlands, and environmentally sensitive open-spaces.
3. *Suburban Areas*. Primarily low density, single-family residential uses with some neighborhood commercial uses.
4. *Neighborhood Areas*. Low to medium density housing, implemented with a variety of housing types, and compatibly scaled commercial and civic uses located in neighborhood centers or commercial corridors along the neighborhood edge, within walking distance of homes.
5. *Centers*. A more concentrated mix of land uses, with commercial areas that serve multiple surrounding neighborhoods.
6. *Core*. A highly urbanized mixture of land uses that includes the downtown area and the associated central business district.
7. *Districts*. A range of generally single use areas including medical centers, universities, industrial parks, and airports that may vary in development form from suburban to neighborhood to center.

Past Subdivision Regulations have contained a uniform set of standards that were applied Metro-wide without regard to the diverse environmental and developed character of Davidson County. The regulations tended to result in conventional suburban patterns.

As there are many development patterns across Metro, it is useful to have alternative development standards to implement varied development patterns in a variety of physical contexts. In addition to the suburban patterns, these Subdivision Regulations provide for rural and urban patterns of development through a Conservation Subdivision and a Walkable Subdivision. An applicant may continue to develop a subdivision using the conventional suburban subdivision method or may opt to use the rural or urban regulations in specific locations.

Transect Area	Typical Subdivision Standards
Natural Areas	No specific regulations apply to these publicly and privately owned lands intended to remain open space. Subdivision for development is not desired.
Rural Areas	Conservation Subdivision Regulations provide for significant preservation of resources (natural, historical, cultural), views, and the “rural character” of an area. This type of subdivision is generally limited to those areas designated as Rural Transects.
Suburban	Conventional suburban subdivision regulations.
Neighborhood Centers Core	Walkable Subdivisions that allow for the restoration and continuation of urban patterns of development as well as for the initiation of urban patterns in additional areas.
Districts	

How to Use these Regulations

As noted above, an applicant may continue to develop conventional suburban subdivisions. The requirements of Chapter 3. General Requirements for Improvements, Reservations, and Design will need to be met for these types of subdivisions. Applicants can opt to develop alternative subdivisions that are more rural or urban in nature. The regulations of Chapter 3 apply to these subdivisions as well. In addition, the requirements of Chapter 4. Conservation Subdivisions must be met for a rural subdivision and the requirements of Chapter 5. Walkable Subdivisions must be met for a more urban pattern of development.